

CIACO

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September 09, 1981

POLAND: Solidarity Congress Continues

Solidarity's congress adopted a more militant posture yesterday amidst continuing procedural discussions.

During extensive talks with delegates, [REDACTED] have noted a slowly growing sense of anger. This has been caused partly by the delegates' sharing of experiences and frustrations in trying to work with government officials. [REDACTED]

The anger has manifested itself in the passage of several strongly worded resolutions. One demanded that the parliament delay consideration of government legislation on worker self-management and instead hold a nationwide referendum on the matter. [REDACTED]

The government bill does not respond to Solidarity's demand that workers play a key role in the naming of factory managers. The union threatened to ignore the law if it is passed without change and to organize its own referendum. [REDACTED]

In another resolution, the delegates baited the union's most severe critics in the USSR, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. The delegates expressed support for workers in Eastern Europe who are struggling for free trade unions and said Solidarity hopes to exchange experiences with them. [REDACTED]

Union leader Walesa has also received sharp and cynical criticism of his "autocratic" style of leadership. During a heated debate, a critic wondered aloud if Walesa "was going to stamp his feet and resign if he doesn't get his way." Walesa, nevertheless, beat back an attempt to limit the powers of the union's central leadership. [REDACTED]

The congress has already been in session beyond its closing date and may continue several days longer. The delegates are still trying to set out the tasks for the commissions that will propose union positions on numerous issues before the second part of the congress at the end of this month. [REDACTED]

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Soviet Reaction

Soviet commentary on the Solidarity congress has bitterly condemned the union's drive for political power and its failure to choose a course leading to constructive compromise and hard work. TASS sought to discredit the congress by claiming that fewer than a quarter of the delegates are, in fact, workers; nearly 90 percent of the participants were alleged to be "salaried employees" of Solidarity or representatives of dissident organizations. Thus far, Soviet media have avoided touchy questions, particularly the troublesome issue of direct self-management for Polish industrial enterprises. [REDACTED]